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TAKING A LAPLANDER—OFF-HAND SKETCHING



BYARD TAYLOR, among his other accomplishments, has that of delineator in crayon, and "does up" faces with considerable taste and truthfulness. In his last *voyage*, the poet-traveler wended his way towards the Polarides, and all just to see a day without a sun above the horizon! Had he tarried in any of our Northern States during the months of March and April, he would have seen and felt the presence of many a day with no sun visible above the horizon. Strange how enthusiastic travelers will go so far to see so common an event. He saw that day, and—but we propose, in a future number, to tell what was his experience in Arctic scenery. For the present, we may see to what use he put his crayons. He says, writing from Muoniovara:

"I have been employing part of my time in making sketches of characteristic faces. Mr. Wolley, finding that I wished to procure good types of the Finns and Lapps, kindly assisted me—his residence of three years in Muoniovara enabling him to know who were the most marked and peculiar personages. Ludwig was dispatched to procure an old fellow by the name of Neimi, a Finn, who promised to comply with my wishes; but his ignorance made him suspicious, and it was necessary to send again. 'I know what travelers are,' said he, 'and what a habit they have of getting people's skulls to carry home with them. Even if they are arrested for it, they are so rich, they always buy over the judges. Who knows but they might try to kill me for the sake of my skull?' After much persuasion, he was finally induced to come; and seeing that Ludwig supposed he was still afraid, he said, with great energy: 'I have made up my mind to go, even if a shower of knives should fall from heaven!' He was seventy-three years old, though he did not appear to be over sixty—his hair being thick and black, his frame erect and sturdy, and his color crimson, rather than pale. His eyebrows were jet-black and bushy, his eyes large and deep-set, his nose strong and prominent, and the corners of his long mouth drawn down in

a settled curve, expressing a melancholy grimness. The high cheek-bones, square brow, and muscular jaw belonged to the true Finnish type. He held perfectly still while I drew, scarcely moving a muscle of his face, and I succeeded in getting a portrait which everybody recognized. I gave him a piece of money, with which he was greatly delighted; and, after a cup of coffee, in Herr Knoblock's kitchen, he went home quite proud and satisfied."

There is no accomplishment more admirable for the traveler, than to be able to sketch and delineate with readiness. It is his passport to many a heart and favorable turn; and, if not exercised upon the most "artistic" principles, is yet productive of real profit. The magnificent volume of Dr. KANE's explorations were illustrated from the Doctor's own sketches; and it is not the least desirable part of the results of that terrible Expedition—whose story he has told so manfully—that it has so familiarized the people with Arctic life and scenery. Had the Commander been less accomplished as an artist, the world would, indeed, have lost much.

So with LAYARD, in his Babylonian exhumations. His sketches give us a more perfect idea of what is discovered, than any words; and without the drawings, the "Researches" would lose more than half their interest for popular circulation. ANDERSSON'S "Lake Ngami" has a double interest from its reproduction of the scenes of that region. GORDON CUMMING'S Munchausen stories of lion and elephant hunting circulate all the more freely from the proof of his valor which he brings in the way of "Scenes from Life," wherein the doughty sportsman is pictured in the midst of his exciting life-and-death adventures. CURTIS'S "Nile Notes" passed all the more currently for their daguerreotypes; and so of many other popular works we might name. So great has become the demand for illustrations, that no work of travels and adventures can sell profitably, without the accompanying reproduction of the scenes; and therefore it has become a necessity for the traveler to be somewhat familiar with design and crayons, if not with colors. TAYLOR'S last works, we believe, did not sell as largely as expected, and for the reason that they were not illustrated. Had the volume on "India, China, and Japan" been elaborated to two books, and liberally endowed with daguerreotypes of the novelties he speaks of, no doubt the work would

have had a sale as large as attended the publication of "Stephens' Travels," a few years since. We hope the record of this Lapland cruise will be brought out fully illustrated, from the sketches made on the spot by the author.

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A WESTERN LANDSCAPE.

WE always like a beautiful picture, whether it be upon canvas, or in words, or of fancy undefined in the brain, for it betrays something of the re-creative power that is within every soul. When the picture is a counterpart of what it is given the eye to gaze upon, it is doubly beautiful from the interest of consociation, and we regard it with critical taste. But, where the eye has not rested upon the scene, and words are used as the medium to convey to us the scene, and the impression it makes upon other minds, there is all the interest, not only of association, but of the mental enjoyment which always comes of beautiful word-painting, sweetly-syllabled illustration; and we realize distinctly that we are guest of artist and poet. Such a picture paragraph is this, of the new capital of Nebraska, Omaha City, from the pen of FRANCES FULLER (Mrs. BARRITT), now a resident of that new Atlantis. Preluding "See Naples, then die," she gives us this visual delight to dream over:

"In the eye of Poetry or Art, (the Art of the painter, we mean,) Omaha is in the meridian of its beauty. There is just enough now of the appearance of a city to indicate its destiny in shadowy outline, without marring the perfect harmony of the original plan of nature. A great and beautiful city we think it must become; but to our eye the change, though grateful in many respects, will bring nothing to equal its present ideal loveliness. Indeed, we doubt if there is a landscape in the world that, in a state of wildness, presents so much the appearance of studied picturesqueness and cultivated beauty. There is not one rough feature in the whole scene. The long, grassy plain, with its river border of trees, the gentle slope of the emerald hills that environ us, the elm-fringed creeks that undulate in countless, graceful windings, the picture-like and panoramic view of Bluff City, and the Iowa hills for miles upon miles, the frequent lake-like views of the devious